

<https://news.usm.my>

English News ▼

# 18 DEC MALAYSIA, THAI RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES COLLABORATE TO ASSIST B40 GROUP

PENANG, 18 December 2015 – Five Malaysian and seven Thai research universities have reached an agreement to establish cooperation in looking for solutions to problems faced by the bottom 40 percent group in society or B40 in both countries.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) Professor Dato' Dr. Muhamad Jantan said this after chairing the discussion in the Forum on Research Collaborations between Malaysia and Thailand Research Universities here recently.

"This discussion marked the first to be held of its kind, although each university has already established relations with other universities, as this time the linkage would be based on the Malaysia and Thailand consortium known as the Malaysia Research University Network (MRUN) and Thailand Research University Network (TRUN).

"The outcome resulting from the discussion was, both MRUN and TRUN have agreed to collaborate around the scope of B40 which was to provide assistance to the bottom 40 percent of the population of each country," said Muhamad.

"Coming in April, there will be a signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between both consortiums in the presence of Ministers from both countries to affirm the cooperation, which would not only include research but also the expertise in industry and community networking at the university," added Muhamad.

Those who participated in the discussion include the Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Research and Innovation) from MRUN namely Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). The consortium from TRUN comprised members from Chulalongkorn University, Kasetsart University, Khon Kaen University, Chiang Mai University, Thammasat University, Mahidol University and Prince of Songkla University.

According to Professor Dr. Mongkol Techakumphu, Deputy President of Research Chulalongkorn University, the discussion is viewed as a more effective approach compared to by merely having collaborations between the individual universities.

“The network linkage should also look at matters such as staff and student mobility, postgraduate programmes as well as the sharing of best practices,” added Mongkol in representing the remaining six Thai universities as well.

He added that TRUN adopted the bottom up approach in their research collaborations and work based on niche clusters according to the strength and expertise of each university, for example, food and agriculture, health, climate change, energy, materials and bioplastics, ASEAN and Asia studies.

Meanwhile, in a separate session, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Industry and Community Network) USM Professor Dato’ Dr. See Ching Mey chaired the Discussion Forum on Community Engagement Collaboration between USM and the Thailand Research Universities.

Ching Mey said that her office was truly delighted with the opportunity in sharing ideas and exchanging information with the representatives from TRUN, who were present to explore means of collaboration in potentially-viable community engagement programmes to be developed together by both parties.

The representatives from TRUN were briefed on the overview of Community Engagement at USM including a number of successfully established community engagement collaborations, as well as the role of the Asia-Pacific University-Community Engagement Network (APUCEN) as a regional higher education institution network, with USM as the Secretariat, in its efforts to promote the culture of university-community engagement in a proactive, inclusive and holistic manner.

Apart from that, they also listened to a presentation on the progress of the Knowledge Transfer Programme (KTP) in its role of driving innovative community engagement activities in Malaysia, and several KTP established between Malaysia and Thailand.

Translation: Mazlan Hanafi Basharudin & Tan Ewe Hoe

Text: Nor Rafizah Md. Zain & Tan Ewe Hoe

Photos: Dzulfikar Azmi Muhamad Ariffin @ Isa



Share This

**Pusat Media dan Perhubungan Awam / Media and Public Relations Centre**

Level 1, Building E42, Chancellory II, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM, Pulau Pinang Malaysia

Tel : +604-653 3888 | Fax : +604-658 9666 | Email : [pro@usm.my](mailto:pro@usm.my) (<mailto:pro@usm.my>)

Laman Web Rasmi / Official Website : [Universiti Sains Malaysia](http://www.usm.my) (<http://www.usm.my>)

[Client Feedback / Comments](http://web.usm.my/smbp/maklumbalas.asp) (<http://web.usm.my/smbp/maklumbalas.asp>) | USM News Portal. Hakcipta Terpelihara USM 2015